

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended). A tinting composition ~~comprising~~ consisting essentially of:

a) at least one colorant composition consisting essentially of:

i) pigment or metal effect agent,

ii) surfactant,

iii) water, glycol, or alcohol, and

iv) optionally, dispersant, dispersing resin, polyethylene oxide polymer, polyethylene oxide glycol, extenders, humectants, thickeners, defoamer, or biocide;

and

b) from 0.05 to 15 % dry weight of at least one additive selected from the group consisting of associative thickener and macromolecular compound having a hydrophobic cavity, based on the weight of said at least one colorant composition.

Claim 2 (previously presented). The tinting composition according to claim 1 comprising from 0.05 to 15 % dry weight of said one macromolecular compound having a hydrophobic cavity.

Claim 3 (previously presented). The tinting composition according to claim 1 comprising from 0.05 to 15 % dry weight of said associative thickener.

Claim 4 (previously presented). The tinting composition according to claim 1, wherein the ratio of said macromolecular compound having a hydrophobic cavity to said associative thickener is in the range of 4:1 to 1:4, based on dry weights.

Claim 5 (previously presented). The tinting composition according to claim 1, 2, 3, or 4 wherein said associative thickener is selected from the group consisting of nonionic hydrophobically modified ethylene oxide urethane block copolymer,

hydrophobically modified alkali soluble polymer, hydrophobically-modified cellulosic, hydrophobically-modified polyacrylamide, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 6 (currently amended). A method of improving the viscosity stability of a coating composition upon the addition of a colorant component, comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a base paint; and
- b) adding to said base paint, a tinting composition comprising:
 - i) at least one colorant composition; and
 - ii) from 0.05 to 15 % dry weight of at least one ~~additive selected from the group consisting of associative thickener and~~ macromolecular compound having a hydrophobic cavity, based on the weight of said at least one colorant composition.

Claim 7 (canceled).

Claim 8 (currently amended). The method of claim 6 wherein said tinting composition ~~comprising~~ further comprises from 0.05 to 15 % dry weight of said an associative thickener.

Claim 9 (canceled). The method of claim ~~6~~ 8 wherein said tinting composition has a ratio of said macromolecular compound having a hydrophobic cavity to said associative thickener is in the range of 4:1 to 1:4, based on dry weights.

Claim 10 (currently amended). The method according to claim 6, ~~7~~, 8, or 9 wherein said base paint comprises at least one associative thickener selected from the group consisting of nonionic hydrophobically modified ethylene oxide urethane block copolymer, hydrophobically modified alkali soluble polymer, hydrophobically-modified cellulosic, hydrophobically-modified polyacrylamide, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 11 (new). The method according to claim 6, 8, or 9 wherein said base paint is a nonaqueous base paint.

Claim 12 (new). The method according to claim 6, 8, or 9 wherein said base paint is an aqueous base paint comprising a volatile organic compound level in the range of from zero to less than 6 % by weight, based on total weight of said aqueous base paint.

Claim 13 (new). The method according to claim 12 wherein said volatile organic compound level is in the range of from zero to less than 3 % by weight, based on total weight of said aqueous base paint.

Claim 14 (new). The method according to claim 13 wherein said volatile organic compound level is in the range of from zero to less than 2 % by weight, based on total weight of said aqueous base paint.

Claim 15 (new). The method according to claim 6, 8, or 9 wherein said at least one colorant composition consists essentially of:

- i) pigment or metal effect agent,
- ii) surfactant,
- iii) water, glycol, or alcohol, and
- iv) optionally, dispersant, dispersing resin, polyethylene oxide polymer, polyethylene oxide glycol, extenders, humectants, thickeners, defoamer, or biocide.

Claim 16 (new). The tinting composition according to claim 1 wherein said pigment is selected from titanium dioxide white, carbon black, lamp black, black iron oxide, red iron oxide, yellow iron oxide, brown iron oxide, phthalocyanine green, phthalocyanine blue, organic red pigment, quinacridone magenta,

quinacridone violet, DNA orange, organic yellow pigment, or combinations thereof.

Claim 17 (new). The tinting composition according to claim 1 wherein said pigment is selected from carbon black, lamp black, black iron oxide, red iron oxide, yellow iron oxide, brown iron oxide, phthalocyanine green, phthalocyanine blue, organic red pigment, quinacridone magenta, quinacridone violet, DNA orange, organic yellow pigment, or combinations thereof.